



FOREIGN POLICY BULLETIN

An interpretation of current international events by the Research Staff of the Foreign Policy Association

FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION, Incorporated

22 East 38th Street, New York 16, N. Y.

VOL. XXV, No. 18

FEBRUARY 15, 1946

U. S. MOVES TO RELIEVE STARVATION ABROAD

RECOGNIZING the fact that "more people face starvation and even actual death for want of food today than in any war year and perhaps more than in all the war years combined," President Truman set forth on February 6 a nine-point conservation program by which the United States will strive to increase the amount of food it sends abroad. Judged by the dietary standards of nearly any other country, the restrictions on American food consumption outlined by the President can hardly be termed drastic. One series of controls, designed to provide 6,000,000 tons of wheat for Europe during the first six months of this year, will oblige Americans to eat darker bread and fewer pastries and to discontinue the manufacture of alcoholic beverages and beer from wheat. Another group of restrictions, adopted to swell our exports of fats, meats, oils and dairy products, may result in the renewal of meat rationing.

WHY ARE MEASURES SO BELATED? The chief question that arises in connection with the President's food-saving program, in view of the truly desperate situation which exists abroad, is why it was not adopted and put into operation months ago. Last August, when President Truman returned from the Potsdam Conference, he described the European food situation in his radio report to the nation, and declared: "We must help to the limits of our strength, and we will." Yet in spite of this pledge, no restrictive measures designed to insure its fulfillment were adopted. On the contrary, lend-lease—on which many Allied countries whose economies had been badly disrupted by the war depended for basic food supplies—was abruptly terminated on August 21, and most of our food rationing controls were lifted within three months after V-J Day.

Meanwhile, hunger and destitution have been growing in nearly every Allied and liberated nation.

To some extent, responsibility for these conditions rests on various foreign governments, for in certain cases their badly conceived and poorly executed controls have encouraged black markets, and in a few instances wholesale redistribution of land has sacrificed immediate agricultural production for long-range radical reform. But it is man's ancient enemy, the weather, rather than any human errors that has brought so large a part of the world to the brink of famine. On the Continent and in North Africa the wheat crop, on which millions of Europeans normally depend for the bread that is the mainstay of their diet, has suffered from the worst drought in fifty years. Other weather factors have so greatly impaired crops in Argentina, South Africa and Australia—normally among the leading granaries of the world—that only the United States and Canada have any considerable amount of wheat on hand. And, to make the world food picture still darker, there have been predictions of famine in India, which may affect many millions of people by next summer. Coming only three years after the Bengal famine of 1943, which took a minimum of 1,000,000 lives, another Indian famine would have grave effects on the already low physical strength of the Indian people, and presumably would produce far-reaching political repercussions.

In view of facts like these, which have been known for months, it was hardly necessary to await the grim report, on February 6, of the Emergency Economics Committee for Europe to learn that 140,000,000 Europeans are subsisting on less food per person than is needed for health-sustaining purposes. Neither was it necessary to wait until Sir Ben Smith, British Minister of Food, warned Parliament early this month that Britain must return to its lowest wartime rations, or until France faced its present acute food

Contents of this BULLETIN may be reprinted with credit to the Foreign Policy Association.

shortages, to discover that the European food problem has developed into a near-catastrophe.

WHY HASN'T UNRRA DONE THE JOB?

Many Americans have had the impression that the United States, by means of its participation in UNRRA, has been sending enough food abroad to insure minimum health standards to all Allied countries in need of relief. This, however, is not the case. UNRRA's resources are available only to those liberated peoples whose governments announce their inability to finance their own immediate relief needs. At the moment UNRRA's European operations are confined to Greece, Yugoslavia, Albania, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Poland, the Ukraine, and Byelorussia. In the Far East, only China is being supplied from this source. Moreover, even within the restricted area of UNRRA's operations, relief work has often been handicapped by lack of supplies. This does not mean, of course, that continued American support of UNRRA is not needed, and it is to be hoped that this organization will now be able to secure more supplies in this country. But it is equally imperative that additional aid be made available to non-UNRRA countries, which presumably have funds to pay and are eager to help themselves.

That the United States has nevertheless waited until now to take strong action on the world food crisis appears to have been due in part to the belief in Washington that this country had such great quantities of grain in reserve that restrictions on domestic consumption would not be needed to assure a surplus for foreign distribution. It has long been clear, however, that this assumption was fallacious, for the United States has been consistently failing to

meet its monthly commitments to various Allied nations for grain exports. It should be noted, in fact, that the new food conservation program is designed solely to fulfill commitments that were made months ago.

ARE AMERICANS UNWILLING TO HELP?

The main reason the Administration has been so tardy in taking steps to implement its reiterated promises to help fulfill foreign food requirements has apparently been its belief that the people of this country were unwilling or unprepared to continue wartime sacrifices once the war was over. That there is some basis for this belief it would be impossible to deny in the face of widespread complaints that the United States has "already done more than enough for foreigners." It would be unrealistic, however, to overlook the existence of other Americans, who are not only ready but eager to help shoulder the responsibilities of the United States as a major world power. In fact, it is partly because more than 40 organizations representing women and labor have indicated their conviction that the United States should follow up military victory with measures for relief and reconstruction that the present food conservation program has finally been inaugurated. Among the most important leaders in this effort has been the League of Women Voters. Members of the League have succeeded in building up in their local communities a politically effective body of opinion that is willing to accept enforced food restrictions at home to relieve desperate needs abroad. In this way the League and other citizen groups have translated their belief in "international cooperation" into concrete action on the basic human problem of food.

WINIFRED N. HADSEL

DEBATES IN UNO HELP CLARIFY ROLE OF SECURITY COUNCIL

The first session of the United Nations Organization was forced by circumstances to work out its procedure in the full glare of the world publicity given to Iran's appeal to the Security Council against intervention by Russia, and the charges brought by the U.S.S.R. and the Ukrainian Republic against Britain in Greece and Indonesia. The knottiest procedural question raised in the course of blunt debates between British Foreign Secretary Bevin and Russia's Foreign Vice-Commissar Vishinsky was whether a country that brings to the Council's attention a situation which, in its opinion, constitutes a threat to international peace and security, thereby becomes a party to a dispute. If that is the case, that country would be disqualified, under the provisions of the UNO Charter, both from voting and, if one of the Big Five, from using the veto power while peaceful methods of dealing with the dispute are under discussion in the Council. Paragraph 1, Article 35 of the Charter (invoked by Iran, the U.S.S.R.,

and the Ukrainian Republic) states that any member of the United Nations may bring to the attention of the Security Council or the General Assembly any dispute, or any situation, which (as defined in Article 34) "might lead to international friction or give rise to a dispute." Iran's appeal against Russia clearly involved a dispute between the two countries. But did Russia, when it charged that the presence of British troops in Greece constituted a threat to peace, thereby become party to a dispute with Britain, and also with the Greek government, which contends that British troops are in Greece with its consent?

WHEN DOES A CHARGE BECOME A DISPUTE? Mr. Norman Makin of Australia, president of the Security Council, acted at first on the assumption that no dispute was involved. Russia, therefore, appeared within its rights in seeking to vote on the matter when Mr. Bevin demanded that the Council acquit Britain of the charge made by Mr. Vishinsky. Subsequently, when it became evident that a major-

ity of the members of the Council were prepared to clear Britain, Russia threatened to use its veto power. Yet Article 27 of the Charter provides that, when the Security Council debates decisions on other than procedural matters, a party to a dispute "shall abstain from voting" as long as the Council discusses peaceful settlement of disputes. If it is assumed that Russia's charge against Britain on Greece produced a dispute, then clearly both Britain and Russia were bound to abstain from voting. When does a charge become a dispute?

While Mr. Makin has been criticized for his initial view of the issue raised by Russia's charge on Greece, his position can be justified by the wording of the Charter. For Articles 34 and 35 clearly seek to draw a distinction between a dispute, and "a situation [which] might lead to international friction or give rise to a dispute." Why would it not have been correct to regard Russia's charge as constituting "a situation"? As a matter of fact it may be argued that it was Russia which originally confused the procedure by speaking of a threat to peace, when it might more accurately have referred to a situation which might cause international friction. If members of the United Nations must wait until a dispute threatening peace has arisen before they call it to the attention of the Security Council, conditions will probably have reached the point where settlement by peaceful means will prove difficult, if not impossible. The most important thing is to give nations the opportunity of discussing situations which, while not yet at the stage where a dispute is taking place, call for action by the United Nations Organization.

If every time a member of the United Nations brings a situation it regards as a threat to peace to the attention of the Security Council it becomes a party to a dispute, small nations will hesitate to invoke paragraph 1 of Article 35—but great powers who want to annoy each other will make use of that paragraph on the ground that they are defending small nations or dependent peoples. While this may discourage flimsy charges by small nations, it will also discourage the free and fearless discussion that is essential to the success of the UNO. Nor is it enough to say that Russia's charge about the British in Greece was either a figment of its imagination or the fruit of propaganda. For both imagined threats and propagation of ideas affect international relations just as much as tangible factors like armed force or economic pressure, and must be taken into consideration.

WHAT IS NATURE OF SECURITY COUNCIL?

The Security Council, obviously, is not a judicial body. Even if it be regarded as an administrative body clothed with semi-judicial functions at certain stages of the process of peaceful settlement of disputes provided for in the Charter, it is at the same time a political body which, when peaceful procedures fail, is empowered to adopt sanctions up to and including the use of armed force against a nation designated as an aggressor. If a judicial decision is desired, then the parties to a dispute must have recourse to the International Court of Justice, whose fifteen members were appointed last week by the General Assembly. It is conceivable that the Court could have been asked to rule on certain points in the Iranian, Greek and Indonesian situations, especially those involving disputed interpretation of documents and statements, some published, others unpublished. But in essence all three cases were political, not justiciable, in character, and required the kind of political or, one might call it, parliamentary discussion accorded to them in the Security Council.

If that is the case, then it may well be that the Council should restudy its rules of procedure, to bring them into closer conformity with procedure familiar to parliamentary bodies. Members of the United Nations might then be free to discuss whatever worries are on their minds (as members of Parliament do in the British House of Commons), without thereby being regarded as having provoked a dispute of major proportions; and points of disagreement could be referred to fact-finding commissions for report to the Council. Any investigating commission, however, to be truly fact-finding should, as Mr. Stettinius said on February 11, "be composed of impartial persons chosen for their competence, who would represent not individual countries but the Council itself." Then the tendency displayed by the great powers during the first session of the UNO to force the Security Council to hand down either an indictment or an acquittal, just as if it were a court of law (which it clearly is not), could be checked, and the Council could function, as it has already shown signs of doing, as a sounding board for the conscience of mankind.

VERA MICHELES DEAN

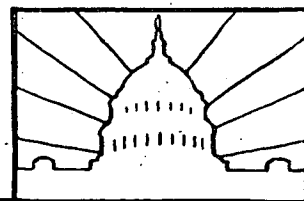
Pioneer Settlement in the Asiatic Tropics, by Karl J. Pelzer. New York, American Geographical Society, 1945. \$5.00

Land utilization and the problems of agricultural colonization in the Philippines and Netherlands East Indies discussed in detail.

FOREIGN POLICY BULLETIN. Vol. XXV, No. 18, FEBRUARY 15, 1946. Published weekly by the Foreign Policy Association, Incorporated. National Headquarters, 22 East 38th Street, New York 16, N. Y. FRANK ROSS MCCOY, *President*; DOROTHY F. LEET, *Secretary*; VERA MICHELES DEAN, *Editor*. Entered as second-class matter December 2, 1921, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Three Dollars a Year. Please allow at least one month for change of address on membership publications.

F. P. A. Membership (which includes the Bulletin), Five Dollars a Year
Produced under union conditions and composed and printed by union labor.

Washington News Letter



ADMINISTRATION CAMPAIGNS FOR APPROVAL OF LOAN TO BRITAIN

Since President Truman on January 30 requested Congress to approve the \$3,750,000,000 loan his Administration tentatively offered the United Kingdom on December 7, Federal government officials responsible to the President have been considering the loan's political implications on our foreign relations. In some quarters in Washington the question is being raised whether the United States will be drawn into a long-term partnership with Britain, at the expense of other members of the United Nations if Britain alone receives a large loan from this country.

CONGRESSIONAL OPPOSITION TO LOAN.

Secretary of State Byrnes strongly upheld the necessity of extending credit to Britain at a dinner of the Foreign Policy Association in New York on February 11. The Secretary noted that from the point of view of international economics, a sound argument can be made for singling out Britain as the recipient of a large loan. The United Kingdom depends on imports to keep its economy in sound condition. It lacks the dollars it needs to purchase goods in the United States and, unless this country helps it, may be unable to finance its transition from war to peace without placing further restrictions on world trade. The proposed British loan is part of the United States' general program for the restoration of international commerce to a prominent place in our own economy and that of other countries. Since this country and the United Kingdom are the principal trading nations of the world, our commercial interests offer compelling reasons for lending to Britain before lending to any other nation, especially on the terms outlined in the draft loan agreement, which bind Britain to lower its imperial preferences and loosen its hold on the sterling area.

The Treasury is preparing a memorandum, suggesting that the United States adopt a program of general international lending to other leading countries as well as Britain, and make loans not through the Export-Import Bank, whose lending capacity is limited by statute, but through the Treasury. Meanwhile, however, Congressional opposition to lending money to foreign governments is so strong that one suggestion which high Administration officials are considering as a possible way of improving the chances of the loan in House and Senate is an agreement to negotiate no other Treasury loans. Those who oppose the loan maintain that the interest of the United States in insuring repayment from Britain might cause this country to take the British side in all

international disputes, regardless of the merits of a given controversy. They hold, moreover, that a loan to Britain alone would leave the world beset by economic problems that would disturb our own stability. While agreeing that economic stability cannot be recovered so long as international trade is paralyzed, they believe recovery will also be impeded so long as France, Russia, China and other countries suffer from actual or potential inflation and a scarcity of goods that can be rectified only by borrowing.

The dilemma of the Administration has become apparent to Congress. On January 31 Representative J. Parnell Thomas, Republican, of New Jersey, wrote President Truman: "I hope that in recommending the loan to the United Kingdom you are taking into consideration possible demands from other nations, and likewise the embarrassment which would accrue to us were we to grant a loan to the United Kingdom and not one to Russia and the other powers." The one intangible issue at stake is whether the United States, by making a single loan, would thereby provide a nucleus for a western bloc of powers. At the same time, the Administration is not now persuaded that it would be wise to let Britain suffer for lack of dollars simply because Congress will not make dollars available to other countries in large supply.

LENDING POLICY NEEDS DEFINITION.

Since the House Committee on Banking and Currency will not take up the loan message at least until it has dealt with the bill extending the life of the Office of Price Administration, and since the House itself will not begin to debate the loan before the last of March at the earliest, the Administration has several weeks in which to make up its mind on its lending policy.

This delay may enable the Administration to persuade public opinion to support the British loan. A majority of the letters Congressmen now receive attack the loan, but an increasing number of newspapers back it. Uncertainty about the decision Congress will finally make perturbs the British government. It has accepted the invitation of the United States to attend the conference at Wilmington Island, Georgia, on March 8 that is to establish the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, in accordance with the terms of the Bretton Woods Agreements. But Britain is doubtful whether it can participate in the Fund and Bank unless it receives the loan.

BLAIR BOLLES